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trol of the means of production and distribution, and I profoundly mistrust the Roman Catholic movement, ably and plausibly led by Belloc and the Chestertons in the name of "democracy." But Mr. Haynes "shows up" the *débâcle* of both Fabianism and our inherited Party System with unflinching clearness, and consistently defends the right of the poor to a free full life and individuality. He has written a brave, learned, and intellectually stimulating book.

F. W. STELLA BROWNE.

London, England.

THE COMMONWEALTH OF NATIONS. An inquiry into the nature of citizenship in the British Empire and into the mutual relations of the several communities thereof. Part I. Edited by L. Curtis. London: Macmillan and Company, Ltd., 1916. Pp. xx, 710. Price, 12s. net.

This work is the result of many writers working together in close collaboration, an examination or *compte rendu* of the problems of Empire, as they are seen by the groups that have sprung up in the United Kingdom, known informally as "Round Table" groups. It supplies, in addition, the foundations upon which the conclusions of the earlier and shorter work, the *Problem of the Commonwealth*, were based. The word Commonwealth is used throughout to express the idea of a government controlled by the public opinion of its citizens, as contrasted with the Eastern theocratic state.

It is not unnatural that when the future of the British Empire was being weighed in the balance men's minds turned to the possibility of its downfall, and to the effects of that downfall. "The disruption of China would seriously affect the rest of the world; but the collapse of the British Empire would be followed by results incalculably greater, and it is no exaggeration to say that it would convulse the whole future of human society." By its union it obviates the risk of war between a quarter of the human race. The problem, therefore, is to keep the Empire stable. But the British Empire, a great international state, presents many problems; its population is distributed amongst some fifty subordinate states in which are represented most of the races and all the gradations of human society "and all these it correlates within the jurisdiction of one permanent state." The imperial

problem is—to the Round Table groups and to a great and influential body of thinkers,—to extend the burden and control of its supreme functions to every community which is fitted for responsible government. Historically Mr. Curtis shows how the British constitution derives from other constitutions; and the far-reaching effects of the opening of the seas and its effect on East and West; and the progress and principles of English colonization until what he calls the “great schism” when the American States broke away and established a separate commonwealth in America. Perhaps the Empire’s important function was to mediate between the East and the West.

After the loss of the American Colonies, a new idea was applied to the problem of the Empire, a distinction between the local and general interest of the communities composing it, and a recognition that the general interests are the concern of all the communities whose interest they affect. As Lord Milner has expressed it, “imperial unity is not a question of shifting burdens, but of discovering new centres of strength. I believe that as the self-governing dominions grow in power, they will feel a stronger desire to share in the responsibilities and the glory of Empire”; the main problem of the *Commonwealth of Nations*, is whether the great international state can continue in its present condition, in which the colonies exercise no voice in the imperial government. If it cannot so continue, is it to be broken up into a number of states, and is it able to develop the structure of a state to fulfil the real conditions of a commonwealth? Has the British Empire, in a word, the vital principle of growth within it? Mr. Curtis’s valuable work is important in showing the way to a clear and conscientious treatment of the enigmas of Empire, which it is not merely foolish, but dangerous to treat as if they were novel and apt for summary treatment.

Broadwindsor, England.

M. J.

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#### SHORTER NOTICES.

ARISTODEMOCRACY FROM THE GREAT WAR BACK TO MOSES, CHRIST, AND PLATO. An Essay. By Sir Charles Waldstein. London: John Murray, 1916. Pp. xiv, 434. Price, 10s. 6d. net.

In this book Sir Charles Waldstein has given us an admirable study of certain tendencies in social morality. He speaks with authority of the changes he has seen coming over the spirit of nations, especially of Germany; and he says most truly that that immense evil, the present war, is due at least in part to fundamental deficiencies in our civilisation.